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When I Was Thoreau in the Morning

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When I Was Thoreau in the Morning

Brianna Breaux

Andrea Saunders Gereighty / Academy of American Poets Award 3rd Place

Assume the Gulf's wide mouth, a sharp outcrop
of rock licked with sea-slicked lichen. Assume:
alone, dawn. I beat my bones on the sand
and run, tight-skinned, not she but all body

and all outside, all hoping animal.
A mile out, I swim to the rocks and out
stretch across the water, stretch out and sun
salute. From the jetty just opposite

a fisherman also alone, youngish
and so in his body's sunrise wades waist

deep to ask for bait. Closer, I see he
clearly; almost a heron, arms high

to still smoke in the spring tide. I answer.
Assume damp flannel, conscious, skin-tight cling:
I've none and sorry, and assume, saying
so tamely, she.